

Target identification system nears completion

For U.S. forces to pinpoint a military target, eight separate military systems weighing up to 60 pounds total, are needed.

Air Force researchers at Kirtland AFB have been able to combine these systems into a single, 10-pound piece of combat gear that is expected to be ready for production before the end of the year.

The Laser Integrated Target Identification System, developed by the Air Force Research Laboratory's Directed

Energy Directorate, uses laser-based technology to identify a target's range and "paint" a laser spot on the target that will guide munitions to it.

It is capable of spotting targets by day or night. Included is a geolocation system to further identify an exact location and an efficient, lightweight battery capability.

This system will be used by combat controllers from the Air Force Special Operations Command, comple-

menting their Battlefield Air Operations kits, which were designed prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom to improve the manner in which target coordinates are relayed.

According to Maj. Jeff Salter, who heads the directorate's Tactical Laser Systems Branch, "This is a two-year project aimed at reducing the weight and size of equipment that a combatant must carry in a battlefield. The overall cost of this development effort

... is around \$19 million," he added.

The next step is to transition the technology to a product center where production can begin. All of the services will be able to use the completed system.

The Directed Energy Directorate is the Air Force's focal point for high-energy laser weaponry. With an annual budget of approximately \$250 million, the directorate employs a military-civilian workforce of nearly 600 people.

Air Force Village cares for enlisted widows, widowers

BY CAPT. RICH OTTON

377th Contracting Squadron

The Air Force Assistance Fund for 2004 is well upon us. Our campaign began March 8 and it ends April 16.

The Air Force Enlisted Village, one of the participants in the AFAF, provides financial and housing assistance to the widows and widowers of Air Force Retirees. All of the money they provide to widows and widowers is considered a grant and does not require repayment.

Facts about the Air Force Enlisted Village:

★ The Air Force is the only service that provides retirement communities for the widows of enlisted retirees

★ There are 365 living quarters in two separate villages—one in Shalimar, Fla. and one in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. Usually there is no waiting period.

★ The Air Force Enlisted Village also provides 12-month space-available housing to widow(er)s of members who die while on active duty. They provide this same service to adult dependents of active-duty

members (normally parents or grandparents if they are in your care).

★ **100 percent** of donations are used for rent subsidy. Overhead costs are not taken from your donation.

As of March 15, Kirtland AFB has raised \$10,773—17 percent of our \$62,551 goal.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact your unit representatives Capt. Rich Otton, 846-4673, or Master Sgt. Dianne Lue, 846-9513, the Kirtland AFB Air Force Assistance Fund representatives.

COMMENTARY

Training: the Air Force road to success

BY 2ND LT. WESLEY K. COOK
377th Mission Support Group

The world is in a constant state of transformation. Changes affect every element under the face of the sun.

No person or organization is exempt from facing the challenges of change management, including the Air Force, which has undergone numerous changes in the last few decades.

Our mission has transitioned from the Cold War, to Global Reach and Global Power, to Global Engagement: a vision for the 21st century Air Force and of our leadership's philosophy of transformation.

Our goals have changed, our numbers have decreased and our force has restructured. In the middle of our continual evolution and transformation, our effectiveness has remained stable and in tact.

This is possible because our senior leaders realize training is the path to mission success. As a result, the U.S. Air Force embraces an unceasing commitment toward training and equipping our members to be the best in the world.

Effective training is the key to accomplishing our missions. As members of the world's elite air and space force, our mission is clear and decisive—defend and protect our national interest. There is a direct correlation between our peacetime preparation and our

wartime and contingency readiness. The job you are performing today has a direct impact on our national security.

With this in mind, it's imperative to be fully committed to your unit training program. Each year millions of dollars are invested in training: from basic military training and officer accession training programs, to technical schools and professional military education. The foundation for success has been provided.

As you train and develop your skills, you must take advantage of every training opportunity to improve and increase your competency.

As a member of a cohesive team, you have a commitment to fulfill your training responsibilities. Squadron commanders, unit training managers, supervisors, certifiers, trainers and trainees, all have a significant role in the wing commander's training program.

Do you know your role on this dynamic team? The old cliché, "a chain is only as strong as its weakest link," applies to the training program. The strength of the training team is only as strong as its weakest member.

A sound training program consists of many individuals all working toward a common goal: to ensure every member in every assigned Air Force Specialty Code in the organization is competent and proficient in performing his or her primary duties.

Have you ever reflected on your contribution to team success? If you are unsure of your responsibilities, I'd recommend you read Air Force Instruction 36-2201, Volume 3, On the Job Training Administration. I am sure you will find this instruction to be an invaluable resource.

As an individual, your personal growth and development is determined by how well-trained and proficient you are. In today's highly competitive Air Force, there is no room for substandard performance.

The skills you develop as an Airman will help shape and mold your future. Well-trained Airmen always stand out from their peers. Trainees should take advantage of every available opportunity to learn how to effectively perform their duties. Doing so will have a tremendous positive impact on their careers.

I learned early on that making training a priority pays huge dividends. As a former unit training and education manager, I acquired an enormous appreciation for the Enlisted Specialty Training program. This program is designed to improve your skill level and job proficiency.

A proficient worker will always get the job done effectively and efficiently and will experience a great sense of accomplishment at the end of the day.

You have a golden opportunity to travel the road to success. It all begins with a decision to make a commitment toward training. You are equipped with the right tools, but more importantly: What will you do with them?

If you are an upgrade trainee, start by realizing you are the most important person in the entire training program. Complete your Career Development Courses and all other mandatory training requirements as soon as possible.

If you are a supervisor, do the right thing and fulfill your supervisory responsibilities.

If you are a trainer or certifier, stay current on your qualifications.

If you are a squadron commander, ensure you are involved with the progress of the unit training program and ensure your personnel are being developed at every level.

The Rev., Dr., Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of Heaven and Earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well."

Regardless of who you are in the training team, start by resolving to do your job well. Doing your job well begins by making a serious commitment to improving your knowledge and competence through training.